

REMARKS

In the present paper, claims 1, 2, 20, 25, and 27 have been amended. No new subject matter has been added. Claims 1-9 and 20-29 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-6, 8, 9, 20-23, 26-29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Zetena (U.S. Patent 5,316,244). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, but have amended claim 1, 2, and 20 to advance this application to allowance.

A. Claims 1-6, 8-9, and 28-29

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite a method of assembly including connecting terminal ends of first and second trough sections to end members of a cable routing system, wherein receiving ends of the trough sections remain freely slideable relative to one another during use of the completely assembled cable routings system so that the first and second trough sections slide relative to one another when only one terminal end of one trough section is disconnected from the respective end member. Similarly, independent claim 2 now recites joined ends that remain freely slideable when completely assembled so that first and second sections slide relative to one another when only one connected end of one trough section is disconnected from the respective end member.

Zetena discloses first and second telescope members 15A, 15B and a channel member 5. The telescope members 15A, 15B are connected to corner connectors 109, 115. Zetena does not disclose that the first telescope member 15A and the channel member 5 remain freely slideable relative to one another during use of the completely assembly system. In contrast, Zetena teaches that when completely assembled, the system has locking clips 25 that set the length of the members and prevent any further sliding movement. Column 3, lines 12-28.

Zetena also does not disclose that during use of the completely assembled system, the first telescope member 15A and the channel member 5 remain freely slideable so that the telescope member 15A and the channel member 5 slide relative to one another when only one terminal end of one of the telescope members 15A, 15B is disconnected from the respective corner connectors 109, 115. Instead, the members 15A and 5 of the completely assembled system are "locked in place" by

the clips 25. When only one terminal end of one telescope member 15A, 15B, of a completely assembled system, is disconnected from the respective corner connector 109, 115, the first telescope member 15A and the channel member 5 remain locked in place by the locking clips 25 and are not freely slideable, as required by claims 1 and 2.

At least for the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 2, and dependent claims 3-6, 8-9, and 28-29 are patentable.

B. Claims 20-23 and 26-27

Claim 20 recites a method of assembling a cable routing system including providing a telescoping trough with first and second trough sections. Sliding movement of the first and second trough sections is limited between minimum and maximum positions by a tab and slot connection. The tab and slot connection prevents sliding separation of the trough sections while permitting sliding contact of the first and second trough sections between the minimum extension position and the maximum extension position.

Zetena does not disclose a tab and slot connection that limits sliding movement between a minimum extension position and a maximum extension position, while permitting sliding movement between the positions. The system of Zetena instead has locking clips 25 that prevent sliding movement all together. The locking clips further do not meet the structural limitations of a tab and slot connection.

At least for the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 20 and dependent claims 22-23 and 26-27 are patentable.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 7, 24 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Zetena (U.S. Patent 5,316,244) in view of Merckle (U.S. Patent 3,351,699). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 7 depends upon claim 2. Claims 24 and 25 depend upon claim 20. In view of the remarks concerning independent claims 2 and 20, further discussion regarding the independent patentability of dependent claims 7 and 24-25 is believed to be unnecessary. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 7 and 24-25 are in condition for allowance.

SUMMARY

It is respectfully submitted that each of the presently pending claims (claims 1-9 and 20-29) is in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is requested. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the below-listed telephone number if it is believed that prosecution of this application may be assisted thereby.

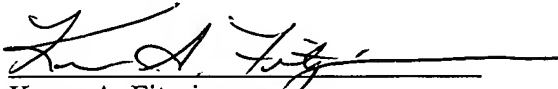
Although certain arguments regarding patentability are set forth herein, there may be other arguments and reasons why the claimed invention is patentably distinct. Applicants reserve the right to raise these arguments in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

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